Josh Nieves-Hurley

TELL Draft

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**Educated Through Success**

Coming up with a definition for the term “educated” could be more difficult than you think. When asking people the question, “What does it mean to be educated?” one might get various responses depending on who they are asking. This is because the idea of education means different things to different people. I believe that being educated means more than just having gone to school. Being educated has more to do with your experiences and what you go through in life, which can include, but is not limited to, schooling. These experiences can help you to learn lessons that can be used when needing to handle tasks in your future. A very well educated person might even be able to recognize that you can use these lessons in various aspects and areas of your life. Throughout my life, I’ve had some experiences that have led me to believe that working hard and having strong desire can help you to accomplish anything. A person that really had an impact on my education is my high school choir director, Mr. Smith. He really embedded this lesson into my head, and now I could say that I am very educated on how to be successful in whatever you do.

**Mr. Smith**

It was early in the morning and Mr. Smith and I were doing the usual routine: Practice, practice, practice. Mr. Smith was my high school choir director, and every morning we practiced for Regional chorus. In order to get to All-State chorus, you had to first successfully audition for District chorus. Then at Districts, you would re-audition for Regionals, finally auditioning for States once you got there. Everyone who makes it to All-State chorus has a big picture of them put up on the wall by the auditorium, and for me this was always a dream.

So that day when we were practicing, Mr. Smith decided to take a break and pull me aside for a private chat. “Look,” he said. “All of these people that you see on the wall; they didn’t have any more talent than you do, they just wanted it more and were willing to work for it.” At that moment I knew he could tell I wasn’t practicing as hard as I should’ve been. He continued, “From what I’ve seen through years of doing these auditions, you have the voice that they’re looking for. I think you can be very successful if you just work for it.”

So I started to work harder, and harder. I wasn’t exactly working hard for myself though, but rather for Mr. Smith. The main priority on my mind was to not let him down and have him on my ass again. Now don’t get me wrong, I definitely wanted it, but honestly I didn’t think I stood a chance at making it all the way to states that year. That was at least until I actually re-auditioned. I was very shocked to see the results come back that informed me that I had jumped from a ranking of 29th in my voice part all the way up to 2nd. That’s when it really sank in that Mr. Smith knew what he was talking about. I continued to work just as hard and successfully made it into All-State chorus. My picture now hangs on the wall by the auditorium, and without the help and nudge from Mr. Smith I don’t know if that would have been possible.

**Varsity Track & Field Jacket**

“This is it,” I thought to myself as I stood on the runway. This was my last meet qualify for the PSAC championship meet next weekend and I couldn’t blow it. The jump I needed to qualify for PSACs was 6.50m (21’4”), and before the other day my season best was only 6.35m (20’10”). In fact, 20’10” was my lifetime best. I was trapped in the 20ft range for 3 years now and all I wanted to do was break 21ft; Saturday was my last shot or I’d have to spend all summer thinking about it.

So I gave it my all, charging down the runway. BOOM! I had left the ground and was stuck in the air for what seemed to be forever. Looking back, the jump almost seemed slow motion. I hit the stand gracefully and popped up out of the pit. Starring at the official intently, I heard, “6 – 8 – 1. Six meters, eighty one.” Confused out of my mind, I looked around to see if anyone else had heard the same number that I had. Everyone was just as astonished as I was. 6.81m translates to 22ft 4.25in, making for a massive lifetime best for me. I now excitedly await PSACs, the biggest meet of my track career so far, to try and earn a spot on the podium.

Coming into the Bloomsburg Huskies track program I was just a walk on. A few weeks in, I found out that the coach needed to make cuts. This made me extremely nervous because I really didn’t want my track career to end so soon. So every day I made sure I busted my ass at practice and worked really hard. Eventually, it was almost time for the first meet and not everyone was going. One morning, about a week out from the meet, I was called over to see the coach. When I saw him, he handed me a bag, which included my uniform, and a varsity jacket. I was ecstatic and knew I had to prove to coach that he had made a good decision.

I now love wearing my jacket, as it represents that I am a part of something bigger than myself. Using the lessons I learned from Mr. Smith years ago, I was able to work hard and earn a spot on the team, which in turn was able to grant me a varsity jacket. This jacket is a constant reminder that you can accomplish anything through hard work.

**PSAC Medal**

Standing on the top tier of the PSAC podium, I finally hear my name called. “And in first place, Josh Hurley of Bloomsburg!” the official announces in a proud manner. I couldn’t believe it. I was standing there in such amazement I almost forgot to smile. I knew this would take a while to sink in but I was still trying to wrap my head around what had just happened.

It was the end of my junior year track season and we were at the PSAC championship meet, where just a few hours ago I was long jumping. When I hit my last jump, I knew it was going to be big. I could feel it. But I had no clue just how big, and when the official read 24’ 3” I was in shock. Not only was I now in first place, but I had also just set a new school record and qualified for nationals. Along with those titles came a nice, shiny, big ol’ medal that I will cherish forever. Though this was an amazing accomplishment, I somehow knew it was coming.

My sophomore year I had not worked nearly as hard as I could have and didn’t even qualify for PSACs. I was extremely disappointed in myself and even thought about quitting. But then, realizing how much I really wanted it, and remembering what I had learned over the years, I came back stronger than ever. I trained in the off season vigorously, kept a well diet, and even cut out any partying. I knew if I gave it absolutely everything I had, I would succeed. And now I have a PSAC 1st place medal to prove it.

The medal means so much more than a win at some collegiate meet. It represents many of my greatest accomplishments tied into one. It represents the mindset I was able to attain through my experiences, including my failures and successes.

Throughout the many experiences in my life I’ve learned what to do and not do in order to succeed. There are many situations you may be faced with where a very broad education could help you determine how to act. This is why education is so important. Education is what you learn everyday by what you go through, and the more you go through, the more prepared you will be for the future.